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Seeds of Honey Plants

Offered by U. S. Department of Agriculture

PELLET GARDENS

Atlantic, Iowa

FALL, WINTER AND SPRING

1944-1945

We try to make available in this seed list, the most desirable collection we can bring together of nectar plants, for bee gardens, waste land and some forage crops.

**ANISE-HYSSOP or FRAGRANT GIANT  
HYSSOP (*Agastache anethiodora*)**

This wonder honey plant attracts the bees more consistently than any other of the 500 under observation in American Bee Journal trial garden.

Anise-hyssop is a native plant which was much used by the Indian. From it was made a beverage for use as we use tea. It was also used for flavoring other foods and from it was extracted a remedy for colds. It is strange that this plant should have been completely overlooked by our herb gardeners. It is very fragrant and has a long flowering period from June until October. The plant is perennial and worthy of a place in any ornamental garden as well as herb garden. As a bee plant it ranks very high. Pioneer settlers reported fine crops of honey from it.

Seed of anise-hyssop is very small, perhaps a half million to the pound. The seed should be planted in late fall, winter or early spring when soil is cool. If the tiny seedlings are permitted to dry out before well rooted they die. We have had best success with a well prepared seed bed and sowing the seed on top of the ground at any time in winter or very early spring. A light sprinkle of straw to protect the young plants from the sun has proved helpful.

A better way is to start the young plants in flats in the greenhouse and transplant to the open ground when two or three inches high. Set about a foot apart in the row.

Seed 20 cents per packet,  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce \$2.00. Plants \$1.25 per dozen, postpaid. Write for price on larger quantity of seed.

**BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL  
(*Lotus corniculatus*)**

Birdsfoot trefoil is a very drought resistant forage plant which is new to American agriculture. Recent tests have indicated that it is adapted to a wide variety of soils and will succeed under varied climatic conditions. It appears to succeed on soils where alfalfa or the clovers do poorly and indications are that the acreage will expand rapidly when farmers become familiar with it. It is especially valuable when mixed with grasses for a pasture crop.

In England it is regarded as a valuable bee plant and beemen in eastern New York report good crops

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of well flavored honey from it. It blooms freely in early summer and continues with a light bloom until frost. For field culture prepare as for clover or alfalfa and seed in either spring or fall. Three to six pounds of seed per acre, with other grasses.

Seed, large packet 20c, \$2.00 per pound, postpaid. Ten pounds or more, \$1.75 per pound, not prepaid. Nitragin inoculation for Birdsfoot Trefoil, ½ bu. size can 30c postpaid. Seed stocks are limited, order early.

### **SAINFOIN or ESPARCET** **(*Onobrychis sativa*)**

Sainfoin is the main source of hay in some European countries. It is drought resistant and will grow on soils where the clovers do poorly. The flowers are so attractive as to make it worth growing in the flower garden as well as in the field. As a honey plant it has few equals as the bees visit the flowers freely from the time of the first opening until the last have faded. Blooms May and June. The honey is of fine quality, and that most often found in the stores of Paris, France, is from this source.

Seed, large packets 20c, \$1.00 per pound, postpaid. Write for price on larger quantity. Seed stocks are limited, order early.

### **WHITE DUTCH CLOVER** **(*Trifolium repens*)**

White Dutch or pasture clover has long been the main dependence for a honey crop over a wide area of the Northeastern States. The plant is easily naturalized along roadsides, in pastures and waste places. Should be included in any mixture of grasses for pasture.

Seed, large packet 20c, \$1.25 per pound, postpaid.

### **PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE** **(*Lythrum salicaria*)**

Purple loosestrife is very adaptable and will grow either on dry land or in boggy spots with its roots in water. The abundant pink flowers are very ornamental and last for weeks in mid-summer. It is the source of much dark honey in some localities.

Some beekeepers have improved local bee pasture by sowing along streams. The plant gradually spreads down stream.

The seed which is very small should be sown on top of the ground in late winter or early spring.

Seed, 20c per packet. Ounce \$1.00, postpaid. Write for price on larger quantity.

### **WINGSTEM OR CROWNBEARD** **(*Actinomeris alternifolia*)**

Wingstem is a rather coarse perennial about five feet tall with irregular yellow flowers. It never fails to find the bees working it freely when in bloom. One of the best of the native honey plants of the

Mississippi Valley. Will grow in either sun or shade. Beekeepers of an earlier day called it "Golden Honey Plant." Where this plant is plentiful the beekeeper need never worry about abundant stores for winter. August bloomer. Fine for waste land. Plant in winter or early spring while ground is cool.

Seed, large packet 20c, 50c per ounce, postpaid. Write for price on larger quantity.

### **MOUNTAIN MINT**

(*Pycnanthemum virginianum*)

The mountain mint, also known as basil, is a native of the Eastern States. It is very attractive to the bees and yields nectar freely during late summer. It is reported as the source of surplus honey in pastures and woodland borders in many localities along the Mississippi River and other Mid-Western streams. The seed is very fine and is best started in the greenhouse and later transplanted to the open. Once established the plants should stand for many years and spread slowly over the surrounding area.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **GLOBE THISTLE**

(*Echinops sphaerocephalus*)

Globe thistle once enjoyed a real boom among the beekeepers under the name of Chapman Honey Plant. The plant is biennial and reaches a height of six feet. It blooms heavily in mid-summer. The flowers are covered with bees and are much grown

for ornament. This plant is easily grown and can be planted in either spring or early fall.

Seed, large packet 20c, 6 ounces \$1.00, postpaid.

### **MOTHERWORT**

(*Leonurus Cardiaca*)

Motherwort is a native of Asia that has been naturalized in many American localities. It is perennial and grows to a height of four or five feet. It is easily raised from seeds and once established

should remain with little attention for many years.

The flowers grow in dense clusters around the stem and the bloom continues for a long period. Bees are attracted to the flowers in large numbers and it is one of the best plants to sow in waste places for bee pasture.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **CATNIP**

(*Nepeta Cataria*)

Catnip is a famous bee plant common to our grandmother's herb gardens. It has since been widely naturalized in fence corners and unused gardens. Perennial, blooming over a long period and never failing to attract the bees. Sow the seed in early spring while the ground is cool.

20c per packet, postpaid.

### **PEA TREE**

(*Caragana arborescens*)

The pea tree is a very hardy shrub or small tree which comes from Siberia. It is drought resistant and is much used for hedge in the Dakotas and in western Canada. It is a free bloomer and the pea-like blossoms yield an abundant supply of well flavored honey in spring. It grows readily from seed.

Seed, large packet 20c, ¼ pound \$1.00, postpaid.

### **GARDEN SAGE**

(*Salvia officinalis*)

The garden sage has been cultivated for centuries for its aromatic leaves which are used in flavoring foods. It is a long lived perennial and should be included in every garden. The flowers are attractive to bees and a high quality honey is gathered from garden sage.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **SALVIA SUPERBA**

This is a strong growing sage reaching a height of about three feet and blooming intermittently all season. It blooms very freely in May and June

## **THE BEE GARDEN**

**T**HE people of Europe live more leisurely than we do in this country. Instead of a strenuous game of golf the man home from the office or shop is content with a quiet hour in his garden. Many a garden is planted with the deliberate intention of attracting insects to the abundance of nectar offered by its flowers.

We read much about the bee gardens of the Old World where the variety of insects coming to the flowers provides a never ending interest to their owners. A few hives of bees are always included to provide the table with honey and to enable the owner to judge the abundance and quality of the nectar which the various flowers offer.

Such gardens vary in size from small plots with a dozen varieties to specialized plantings of amazing extent. Such a hobby can occupy as much or as little time as the owner elects. It can provide diversion for an idle hour or it can serve as a laboratory for an extensive investigation in the field of entomology.

The owner of such a garden is likely to be well informed in some branches of botany or entomology or both and to enjoy his leisure at far less cost than the man who must find his pleasure far from home.

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and again in September with some flowers all summer. It is usually swarming with bees.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **SALVIA VIRGATA**

*Salvia virgata* is a strong growing perennial reaching a height of three or four feet, with light blue flowers. It is native to Europe and the Orient. It blooms freely in mid-summer and is much visited by the bees. It is of easy culture and may well be included in any ornamental garden as well as bee pasture. Seed, 20 cents per packet, postpaid.

### **WILD INDIGO**

Wild indigo is a perennial native to the mid-west prairies which is worthy of much more common cultivation. Dozens of stalks arise from a single root in a well established plant and often reach a height of three feet with large clusters of blue pea-like flowers. Very attractive to the bees.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **HOREHOUND**

**(*Marrubium vulgare*)**

Horehound is a well known herb which comes from Eurasia and has become naturalized over parts of the United States. It blooms from July to September and the flowers attract many bees. It is the source of much dark honey in some localities.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **ASTER**

The wild asters are the last source of nectar in many localities. We offer a mixture of several of the most ornamental varieties including New England aster, smooth aster and arrow leaf aster. All are worthy of a place in any garden. Plant in early spring while the ground is cool. Perennial.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

### **BURNET**

**(*Sanguisorbia minor*)**

This hardy perennial native to Eurasia is sometimes grown in the flower garden as an ornamental, in the vegetable garden as a salad plant and in the field as a forage crop. It is very drought resistant and easily grown. It is very attractive to the bees, blooming in midsummer for several weeks, but apparently is sought mostly for pollen.

Seed, large packet 20c, postpaid.

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN BEE PLANT**

**(*Cleome serrulata*)**

The Rocky Mountain Bee Plant is an annual which grows wild principally in the high plains region west of the Missouri river but may be found in the wild state as far east as Iowa. It is a valuable source of good quality honey in some localities. The plant is annual and reaches a height of three to four feet. It blooms for several weeks beginning in midsummer. The flowers, which are pink or purple and large and showy, are very attractive to the bees. Plant in fall, winter or early spring. Fall or winter planting is preferable.



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Seed, large packet 20c, ounce 50c, postpaid.  
Write for price on larger quantity.

## **BORAGE**

**(*Borago officinalis*)**

Borage has long been famous as a bee plant and has been much planted in European honey plant gardens. It is an annual native to Europe and North Africa.

Although the honey is dark and not of the best quality the bees visit the flowers so freely that it should be included in every extensive collection of honey plants. It is a hardy plant blooming for a long period and seed should be planted in early spring where the plant is to grow.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

## **MIGNONETTE**

**(*Reseda odorata*)**

Mignonette has long been a favorite with those who have bee gardens. It is an annual which comes from North Africa and has been widely distributed in ornamental gardens. The bloom is very fragrant. Some very extravagant claims have been made as to the amount of honey to be secured from this source. While there is no proof that such yields can be secured the flowers are very attractive to the bees and it seems probable that if enough of it were available good crops might be harvested. Try it in your garden.

Seed, large packet 20c, ounce 75c, postpaid.

## **SAFFLOWER**

Safflower is a thistle-like plant reaching a height of about three feet. The large yellow flowers are of interest in the garden but it is cultivated principally as a source of drying oil in demand by the paint and varnish industry. Bees visit the flowers freely but no information is available as to its probable value as a source of honey. Annual.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

## **CALIFORNIA POPPY**

**(*Escholtzia californica*)**

The California poppy is a familiar plant to those who have visited the West Coast in springtime. Millions of them may have been seen in bloom along the roadsides and in waste places.

In the East it is grown as an annual. It reseeds freely and is easily grown in gardens or naturalized in sunny situations. The bees visit the flowers in large numbers for pollen. It blooms over a long period.

Seed, large packet 20c, ounce 75c, postpaid.

## **PHACELIA**

The fiddle neck phacelia, (***Phacelia tenacetifolia***) is native to California but is widely grown in European gardens as a honey plant. In Germany it is also grown to some extent for forage and is used for silage. It is a famous bee plant and is one of the most commonly grown where gardens have been planted especially for the bees.

It is an annual of easy culture and the flowers are covered with bees from morning till night. It reaches a height of about two feet with blueish or pink flowers.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.



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## **DRAGONHEAD**

**(*Dracocephalum moldivici*)**

An annual of the mint family which is of easy culture and reseeds readily. Very attractive to the bees.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

## **PRICKLY POPPY**

**(*Argemone*)**

The white prickly poppy is a native to the southwest and is a common sight from Kansas to Texas. It is an annual of easy culture and with large white flowers for a long time in summer. The bees are much attracted to this plant for pollen.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

## **WAGNER PEA**

**(*Lathyrus silvestris wagneri*)**

A forage plant developed by a German plant breeder after many years of effort. A deep rooting perennial which starts slowly and requires two or three years to become fully established. Drouth resistant and succeeds on poor soils. Reported as lasting for a lifetime when once established and as providing good forage for livestock and pasture for bees. Seed is very scarce and at this time we can offer it only in the small trial packets. Our supply may not last all season.

Seed, 20c per packet, postpaid.

Seed of any of the above, 20c per packet, or six packets for \$1.00. Any fifteen packets for \$2.00. Postpaid.
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## **BOOKS**

**FLOWERS OF THE WILD** by Frank C. Pellett. A book about wild flowers based on thirty years experience with several hundred species. More than 100 photographs and four color plates illustrate the text. Here will be found useful information for insuring success with native plants. Cloth binding, 168 pages. \$1.00 per copy, postpaid.

**BIRDS OF THE WILD** by Frank C. Pellett. This book is designed to provide information as to the requirements to be met in attracting wild birds. Nesting sites, feeding stations, watering places and plants to provide food are discussed freely. 128 pages, cloth binding, \$1.00, postpaid.

**A LIVING FROM BEES** by Frank C. Pellett. A cloth bound book of 304 pages, well illustrated which as its title suggests outlines proved methods of making a living from bees. The fundamentals of honey production are explained with reasons for every necessary manipulation.

Conditions under which beekeeping is practical as an exclusive business and when it is better to be followed as a sideline are discused at length. \$2.00, postpaid.

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